



## County of McHenry Department of Planning and Development

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### **McHenry County Installs Raingarden and Xeriscaping**

WOODSTOCK, IL - Water conservation in McHenry County is serious business now and for the future. In an effort to demonstrate ways that it can be done, the County is building demonstration gardens on the McHenry County campus in front of the Administration Building. Funding for the gardens was provided by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Illinois American Water Environmental Grant Program.



*Before and after the raingarden was installed in front of the Administration Building.*

The first to be installed was a raingarden, which can be best described as a garden planted with native plants that use and reduce storm water runoff. These gardens filter pollutants and improve the soil's ability to absorb water. Insects, birds and butterflies benefit from the raingardens because they provide food, shelter and habitat for them.

In late-September, a xeriscaping garden will be built. This garden will create a landscape to reduce water use with proper plant placement and the use of native, drought-tolerant plants. This garden has the dual goal of first reducing water use, then the need for extensive lawn maintenance. In both the raingarden and the xeriscaping garden, signs will be posted to describe the different plants and their unique traits, as well as information about how the gardens were constructed.

Mary McCann, Chairman of the McHenry County Environmental and Natural Resources Committee, said, “The raingarden and xeriscaping projects will be excellent examples for residents to see how they can easily and successfully conserve water on their own. It is important to show the benefits and affordability, since it has been recognized that McHenry County may experience water shortages as soon as 2030, if nothing is done to conserve water quantity and quality.”

McHenry County has developed a Water Resources Action Plan (WRAP) to ensure that a sustainable water supply will meet the demands of projected population growth for the County in 2030 and thereafter. A major section of WRAP is water conservation where the importance of reducing the demand for water, improving the efficiency in the use, reducing losses of water and improving land management practices are highlighted. The development of the raingarden and xeriscaping are examples of how residents can help meet those goals.

For more information, please contact McHenry County Water Resources Manager Cassandra McKinney at 815-334-4560 or [clmckinney@co.mchenry.il.us](mailto:clmckinney@co.mchenry.il.us).

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*“McHenry County government is dedicated to providing the highest quality services for the health, safety, and welfare of the County’s residents and communities. We foster representative and transparent government to ensure social, economic and environmental justice.”*